

PLANNING STATEMENT

# Land off South Close / Providence Lane, Bishopston, Swansea

ON BEHALF OF GWŶR COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

November 2024



PLANNING  
LIMITED

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Project:	Land off South Close / Providence Lane, Bishopston, Swansea	Job Number:	22.181
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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies a full planning application, submitted on behalf of the Gwŷr Community Land Trust ("GCLT") for the construction of a co-housing scheme comprising of 14 no. near zero carbon affordable homes, common house (to include shared facilities), outbuildings, access and car parking and associated cycle and pedestrian access and extensive landscape works including sustainable drainage systems ("SuDs") features and community open space provision, on land at South Close / Providence Lane, Bishopston, Swansea, SA3 3EZ.
- 1.2 The application comprises a series of drawings and suite of technical information to demonstrate the suitability of developing the site for housing. The full list of plans and reports is noted below.

DOCUMENT	PREPARED BY
<b>Affordable housing</b>	
Community led housing briefing note	Cwmpas
Manifesto	Gwŷr Community Land Trust
Affordability policy	Gwŷr Community Land Trust
Allocations policy	Gwŷr Community Land Trust
Resident membership policy and joining process	Gwŷr Community Land Trust
Exit and contingency strategy	Gwŷr Community Land Trust
Briefing Document	Gwŷr Community Land Trust
<b>Agricultural land</b>	
Agricultural land quality and considerations report	Kernon Countryside Consulting Ltd
<b>Architecture and design</b>	
Design and Access Statement	Pentan Architects
Site location plan	Pentan Architects
Existing site plan and topographic survey	Pentan Architects
Proposed site plan	Pentan Architects
Proposed roof plan	Pentan Architects
Proposed view from South Close	Pentan Architects
Proposed view from orchard	Pentan Architects
Proposed view within common ground	Pentan Architects
Proposed view towards common ground	Pentan Architects
Proposed CGI from South Close	Pentan Architects
Proposed site sections 1 of 2	Pentan Architects
Proposed site sections 2 of 2	Pentan Architects
House type A end type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects

House type A mid type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
House type B end type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
House type B mid type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
House type C end type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
House type C mid type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
House type D end type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
House type D mid type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
House type E end type floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
Common house floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
Barn and additional needs support floorplans and elevations	Pentan Architects
Site Constraints Report	Pentan Architects
<b>Engineering</b>	
Drainage Strategy and Flood Consequences Assessment	PHG Consulting Engineers
Engineering layout	PHG Consulting Engineers
<b>Tree &amp; Ecology</b>	
Technical Note -Update report	Koru Ecology Associates
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal update	Koru Ecology Associates
Technical Note -Tree Inspection	Koru Ecology Associates
Winter bird surveys	Acer Ecology
Tree information report	Treecare Consulting
<b>Green infrastructure and landscape</b>	
Landscape general arrangement plan	Macgregor Smith
Existing vegetation plan	Macgregor Smith
Vegetation retention and removal plan	Macgregor Smith
Landscape planting plan 1 of 2	Macgregor Smith
Landscape planting plan 2 of 2	Macgregor Smith
Hardworks plan	Macgregor Smith
Tree protective fencing	Macgregor Smith
Typical detail – tree pit	Macgregor Smith
Landscape and green infrastructure strategy	Macgregor Smith
Illustrative masterplan	Macgregor Smith
Landscape management strategy	Macgregor Smith

Planning	
Completed planning application forms	LRM Planning
Planning Statement	LRM Planning
PAC Report	LRM Planning
Topographical survey	
Topographical survey	Catling's Land Surveys
Transport	
Transport Statement	Lime Transport
Stage 1 Road Safety Audit	Lime Transport

- 1.3 It should be noted that some technical matters have been covered elsewhere in other documentation. Waste management has been set out in the Transport Statement, and the energy and performance strategy which is covered within the Design and Access Statement. The lighting strategy has been considered and included within the Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy. Glamorgan and Gwent Archaeological Trust were engaged on the need for reporting/assessment; GGAT confirmed that it is unlikely that any reporting would be required prior to determination of any application.
- 1.4 Together these documents provide an explanation of the proposal and how it represents an appropriate residential development, in accordance with national and local planning policy.
- 1.5 It is our assertion that this proposal closely aligns with the core goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Acts and in turn accords with driving principles of Planning Policy Wales and key policies of the Development Plan, in that;
- the site is located within the **identified settlement**, in close proximity to a range of shops, services, education facilities, employment and transport opportunities;
  - moreover, the project will be **community led and community built**: Gŵyr CLT will adopt a community-led approach which will be driven by local people, members and residents, with all residents having the opportunity to be involved in the construction process;
  - the scheme will deliver **near zero carbon homes**, both high performance and high quality with the scheme offering low impact living enabling a highly sustainable lifestyle;
  - all of the homes will meet the **definition of affordable housing**, which will be managed and maintained as such by Gŵyr CLT, in perpetuity;
  - the scheme adopts a designed for **people not profit**: Gŵyr CLT will use **co-housing design principles** to create a strong, supportive, healthy and resilient community;
  - the development of the site will make a significant contribution in terms of **net biodiversity benefit** constituting an overall enhancement while safeguard ecological value both through the construction process and into the future;
  - the project will make significant **community improvements** through the enhanced pedestrian links and extensive provisions which includes woodland coppice, pond, play areas, orchard planting and recreation space;
  - the **well-considered, low impact design** is befitting to the edge of settlement setting and through the provision of a landscaped/planted buffer will safeguard against concerns regarding loss of green infrastructure and landscape impact, and
  - it is hoped that the proposal will form a **new and successful precedent** for sustainable, community-led housing in Wales.

- 1.6 An assessment of the scheme and how it aligns with the well-being objectives, is also set out in Appendix 1 of this statement.

## 2 Site description and context

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### THE SITE

- 2.1 The site, which measures approximately 6.2 acres (2.5 hectares), is formed by an open field bound by trees and hedgerows, situated to the east of South Close and south of Providence Lane which has historically been used for market gardening but hasn't been used as such for an extended period of time. The developed footprint of the proposed development is approximately 0.7ha in area.
- 2.2 The site is located fairly centrally within Bishopston and Murton, a defined settlement of Swansea. It is situated at the edge of Bishopston, where surrounding land uses are typically residential and rural. More specifically, the site is bounded:
- to the **north** by Public Right of Way ("PRoW"), Providence Lane, an agricultural land parcel, Bishopston Primary School, and dwellings beyond;
  - to the **west** by the South Close cul-de-sac and dwellings of Bishopston Road;
  - to the **east** by PRoW, field parcels and dwellings of Eastlands Park beyond; and
  - to the **south** by field parcels, with dwellings of Withy Park beyond.

### SITE CONTEXT, CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.3 The site itself does not fall within the designated Green Wedge, nor is it within an area of Landscape Protection or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ("AONB"). Much of land surrounding the Bishopston and Murton is constrained by such designations, specifically:
- land to the **north** falls within the Gower AONB, the Barland Common Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and is sensitive to the Bishopston Conservation Area.
  - land to the **west** also falls within the Gower AONB and is affected by the Pwll-Du Head and Bishopston Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest, Gower Ash Wood Special Area of Conservation and pockets of Ancient Woodland.
  - land to the **east** includes two SINCS, Clyne Common and Golf Course, and Bishops Wood and Caswell Bay.
- 2.4 The Cadw heritage maps confirms that the site does not contain or is within close proximity to any heritage assets, whilst the site is also outside of the Bishopston Conservation Area.
- 2.5 The Natural Resources Wales development advice maps confirm that the site is not at risk of flooding, albeit a localised area of surface water flooding is noted along the southern edge of the developed portion of the site.
- 2.6 The site is indicated as 'urban land' on the predictive Welsh Government map, however the base layer on the maps indicates that the site and wider area is grade 2 best and most versatile agricultural land. An Agricultural Land Quality assessment prepared by Kernon Countryside Consultants Ltd confirms that the site is in fact subgrade 3a, therefore falls just within the best and most versatile land classification. Most of the land surrounding Bishopston and Murton is also identified as falling with grade 2, which is of higher and better quality than the site itself.
- 2.7 Public Rights of Way exist along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. PRoW B19 follows Providence Lane to the north, connecting to PRoW B18 which extends to the east and provides direct access to Murton. PRoW B17 extends to the south from B18, providing access to Pyle.
- 2.8 As a smaller settlement, Bishopston and Murton offers a range of services and facilities commensurate to the size of the village, with both villages being within walking distance of the site. Bishopston Road which hosts the majority of services in Bishopston is approximately 70m to the west, just a one minute walk, whilst the local centre at Murton is some 500m to the east, a seven minute walk from the site. The shops, services and facilities available include the following;

- The Valley restaurant and public house;
- The Joiners public house;
- A Co-operative food store;
- Bishopston playground;
- Bishopston Primary School;
- Bishopston Comprehensive School;
- Bishopston Sports Centre;
- St Teilo's Church Hall;
- The Plough and Harrow restaurant and public house;
- A post office and convenience store;
- A health clinic;
- Murton Methodist Church;
- Murton health centre and a pharmacy;
- A chiropractic centre;
- Bishopston community centre;
- Murton park and playground.

2.9 The site also benefits from good connectivity with bus stops present along Bishopston Road, the nearest of which is at the end of South Close some 70m from the site. These stops serve two bus routes, services 14 and 113.

- Bus route 14 operates between Swansea bus station and Pennard, via Brynmill, Singleton Hospital, Blackpill, Mayalls, and Murton. It provides 15 services per day (excluding Sundays), one per hour between 07:00 and 20:00, and one per two hours between 20:00 and 00:00.
- Bus route 113 operates between Murton and Caswell Bay, via Pyle, Langland Bay, and Oystermouth. It provides four services on Wednesdays and Fridays, between the hours of 09:00 and 14:00.

2.10 The nearest train station is at Swansea, and can be reached via car in 20 minutes, bicycle within 40 minutes or by bus within an hour. Swansea station is located on a number of lines and provides access to a wider area with destinations including Cardiff, Pembroke, Manchester, and Shrewsbury.

2.11 Further, more detailed information in respect of the transport opportunities is contained within the accompanying Transport Statement.

2.12 In terms of wider context, the site is located approximately 3.5km west of Mumbles and is located within the Gower fringe sub-catchment area.

2.13 In regard to local vernacular, the dwellings directly adjacent to the site along South Close are detached and semi-detached bungalows, or 1.5 storey properties with dormer windows. Along Bishopston Road, dwellings include a variety of two and three storey detached and semi-detached housetypes.

2.14 The material palette of dwellings along South Close includes smooth and roughcast render with some brick detailing and brown roof tiles. Dwellings along Bishopston Road adopt a similar palette albeit dwelling type and architectural detailing is more varied.

2.15 Further information in respect of the assessment of the character of the area is contained within the accompanying Design & Access Statement.



## HOUSING NEED

- 2.16 In order to meet the requirement for new dwellings set out in the adopted Local Development Plan “LDP”, an average of 1,040 new dwellings was required to be completed each year across a 15-year plan period. The Annual Monitoring Report (“AMR”) published in 2022 reveals that only 5,952 dwellings have been completed between the 2010-2011 and 2021-22 period, equating to an average of only 496 dwellings per annum. This equates to just 48% of the cumulative average annual requirement of general needs housing.
- 2.17 The AMR reveals that Swansea has fallen below the annual average requirement for three consecutive years, and the Local Development Plan Review Report published in July 2023 confirms that combined with the lower levels of housing delivery achieved over the initial years of the plan period, there is a need to achieve an annual build rate of 2,570 new homes between 2022 and 2025 to meet the LDP housing target. Significantly, this level of delivery is considered to be unprecedented and will rely on numerous sites coming forward at the same time, and it is unlikely that the LDP housing requirement will be delivered in full during the LDP period.
- 2.18 Specifically in regard to affordable housing, the 2015 Local Housing Market Assessment (“LHMA”) identifies a need for 7,400 affordable dwellings across the county to be delivered over the period 2010 – 2025. This equates to an average delivery of 493 affordable homes per annum. The latest Annual Monitoring Report notes that only 768 affordable dwellings have been completed between 2017 and 2021, equating to an average of 192 affordable dwellings per year, some 303 dwellings less than there is an identified need for. More recently however, the LDP Review Report published in 2023 reveals that over the longer term, the annual affordable housing completion rate is just 134, with 1,607 affordable units being built between 2010 and 2022. This shortfall of 359 affordable dwellings per year has equated to only 22% of the affordable housing target being achieved, and there being an unmet need of 5,793 affordable new homes across the county as a consequence.
- 2.19 Of relevance to this site, the Gower and Gower Fringe Strategic Housing Policy Zones (SHPZs) were identified to deliver around 500 new dwellings across the plan period, 300 of which are to be in the Gower Fringe, and 200 in the Gower. The latest evidence available presented in the Growth Scenarios and Spatial Approaches documents published as part of the LDP2 background paper pack in May 2024, reveals that 118 of the 500 dwellings have been delivered. There is an absence of specific data available within the published Annual Monitoring Reports for the area prior to 2019, and so the precise picture is somewhat unclear but from the data available it appears that there is a shortfall of up to 382 dwellings across these SHPZs. This level of delivery is reflective of the general picture for the County, as noted above.
- 2.20 Swansea Council are in the process of reviewing their LDP, with work commencing on LDP2 in early 2023. Although at an early stage, the LDP Review Report published in 2023 acknowledges that there have been changes to national planning policy since the LDP was adopted, with Welsh Government emphasising the priority of affordable housing across the country.
- 2.21 Welsh Government has acknowledged the increasingly emergent affordable housing crisis and is pushing for new homes to be delivered across the country. Audit Wales published a paper in September 2024 which revealed that the government has set a target of building 20,000 new low carbon social homes by March 2026, and to do so, will need to “*deliver all of the scheme in its pipeline ... and a small number more*”. The target was set in 2021, and three years into the five-year programme, it was revealed that it had secured fewer than half (between 8,859 – 9,197) of the 20,000 social homes. It follows that the majority of the target is still to be delivered, and there is increasing urgency for them to come forward. Evidence to this is the appointment of an Affordable Homes Task Force, which was established in November 2024. The Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government revealed that “the immediate focus will be on short-term actions to expedite delivery of homes in our current building programme”.
- 2.22 Although Swansea Council have clearly acknowledged this context and the new priorities of Welsh Government in the LDP review process, the preparation of LDP2 is at such an early stage that it is unreasonable to expect there to be any short term benefits from LDP2 in respect of affordable housing. For context, plan preparation, including the pre-deposit consultation, call for sites process, and preferred strategy consultation, are forecast to take place between early 2023 and mid 2025,

with consultation on the deposit plan scheduled for summer 2025, and submission to Welsh Government for examination currently anticipated as being early 2026. Adoption is eventually expected at the end of 2026. Summarily, Swansea Council cannot expect there to be any real positive changes to the affordable housing completion rate in the next two years at least, and consequently the significant under provision of affordable housing is highly likely increase given the trends noted above.

### 3 Proposed development

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- 3.1 The proposed development aspires to achieve an exemplar community-led scheme which has the opportunity to set the standard for developments of this kind and provide a benchmark for others to follow. It seeks to deliver a community housing project constituting 100% affordable homes, which promotes sociable, supportive and healthy lifestyles by designing new shared-ownership houses which integrate with shared facilities and infrastructure within a sustainable and environmentally sensitive development.

#### GWŶR COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

- 3.2 Gŵyr CLT were formed four years ago by a core group of families from Bishopston and the neighbouring areas, who had all personally experienced the devastating impacts of insecure and unaffordable housing on their lives. From there the organisation has grown to include members of the wider community, including active board members, who wanted to support the creation of new affordable housing and tackle the affordability crisis which is pushing local people out and away from their communities.
- 3.3 With the ambition of finding a solution not only for themselves but others, the group was formed and set about searching for potential land opportunities looking at two local settlements before focusing upon Bishopston & Murton, which became their focus given the size of the settlement, the access to public transport and other existing services and facilities and not least given that all core members had strong links in terms of living or working within the community.
- 3.4 Today total membership is up to 49, including children and non-resident members, with a total of 11 potential households represented with residential entry requirements necessitating members to have local connections, aligning with Swansea Council's guidelines, and were selected primarily based on their level of housing need and strength of their local connection (please refer to the accompany documents prepared by Gŵyr CLT for more information).

#### THE COHOUSING CONCEPT/SELF-BUILD

- 3.5 Gŵyr CLT aims to promote their key objectives through the adoption of evidence based cohousing design principles, which encourage neighbourliness, social interactions and mutual support through the way housing is designed, built and laid out. This is particularly apparent through the way the design balances public and private space, prioritises shared over large private gardens, and value human scale spaces over extensive car access.
- 3.6 The scheme strives to follow self-build/self-finish housing principles on a collective basis which means that residents will have the opportunity to take a significant role in the construction of their homes, with design, construction and materials chosen to facilitate this. For those unable to undertake practical work construction work, 'sweat equity' in the form of other more administrative tasks, also helps to reduce the build cost and enable residents without savings to invest by other means. More information in this respect is contained within the accompanying Briefing Document prepared by Gŵyr CLT.
- 3.7 Again, further information in respect of the cohousing approach is contained within both the supporting documents prepared by Cwmpas and Gŵyr CLT, together with the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

#### QUANTUM OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.8 The development comprises 14 no. affordable low cost shared-ownership dwellings based on local need/demand coupled with the ambition of offering a mixed and balanced development. Specifically, this includes:
- Eight three-bedroom dwellings;

- Four two-bedroom dwellings; and
- Two one-bedroom bungalows.

## SHARED FACILITIES AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.9 In addition to the individual homes, the scheme also includes a shared 'common house' which will provide communal accommodation, where residents will be able to offer visitors a place to stay without requiring their own additional bedspace (avoiding the need for 'spare rooms'). The building will also contain a central meeting space and kitchen, shared home working space, a laundry room, a freezer/pantry room and provision for post/delivery of parcels, aligning with the co-housing principles.
- 3.10 A number of ancillary structures including cycle store, sheds, polytunnel/growing space and refuse/recycling store will also be provided to provide practical day to day needs for the future occupiers, together with the further 'barn' type building which will include additional communal space comprising of additional needs support space, a barn/workshop area, kitchenette and W/C to serve the new community.

## OPEN SPACE, GARDENS AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.11 Each dwelling is provided with a small south facing private garden, with entrances opening out onto a large shared gathering space and play area. This communal courtyard, known as the 'common garden', is bookended by the common house and the barn building, providing focal community functions at the centre of the site. The scheme intentionally prioritises the large communal garden but maintains elements of independence by ensuring all dwellings have access to useable private amenity space. With the emphasis on community and communal spaces, the private spaces are smaller than usual family homes largely based on shared/communal provision but also due to the avoidance of need for individual storage that is needed, bins, cycles, lawn mowers etc.
- 3.12 A communal garden/growing space is shown along the eastern and southern areas of the site and will provide community growing spaces for the future occupiers, whilst access for members of the community will be permitted on a membership/ subscription type arrangement which is commonplace with allotments. The design includes for a community orchard to the north of the site, with more open recreation and play space provided to the south, including a pond and play provision
- 3.13 The central communal courtyard is for residents' use, however it is intended that the wider gardens, play spaces, and orchards along the perimeter of the site will be accessible to all, providing new benefits to existing residents of Bishopston and Murton who will be able to enjoy the valuable resources and enhanced pedestrian links available across the site.
- 3.14 The proposed scheme includes approximately 4 acres of enhanced landscape for public access, including areas for community-supported agriculture. The landscape proposals have been developed to give priority to pedestrians over vehicles, with an emphasis on improved accessibility of the site to the public. A network of new footpaths around the site connects provides new pedestrian connections from South Close onto Providence Lane, with the existing retained public right of way on the eastern site border being enhanced through the improved landscaping.
- 3.15 Overall, the scheme makes provision for significant biodiversity and open space enhancements for the community by maximising opportunities to retain key features, providing public access and supplementing this through the inclusion of a number of new provisions including woodland coppice, pond, community orchard, growing areas, enhanced grassland/pedestrian walks, natural play and recreation space.
- 3.16 Further, more detailed information in this respect is contained within the accompanying Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy prepared by Macgregor Smith, which identifies and explains in greater detail the key strategies to be adopted in relation to biodiversity and landscape.

## DESIGN/MATERIALS

- 3.17 In terms of design, the dwellings are inspired by the concept of a “farmstead cluster” designed to make the transition from nearby suburban housing and the more agricultural landscape to the east. The proposed buildings intend to offer a range in heights adding variety and interest to the design, from the single storey bungalows through to the 2 storey houses (two storey on the southern side but one and a half in height to the north). This scale is in keeping with the bungalow ridge heights seen at South Close, whilst responding to the wider open landscape setting. The communal buildings are more one and a half storeys in height.
- 3.18 The proposed density is broadly in line with other suburban areas and is in keeping with building typologies in the surrounding areas, albeit it is acknowledged that the smaller private gardens and reduced vehicle access is proposed which allows for a much more generous open space provision, helping to create a more rural character in keeping with the open landscape nature of the settlement.
- 3.19 The material palette will comprise a combination of natural and agricultural materials, such as timber boarding, corrugated metal sheeting and steel rainwater goods for new dwellings, to integrate the homes into the garden spaces and reinforce the farmstead character. The common buildings will principally be made up of corrugated metal profile sheeting again reiterate the agricultural influences underpinning the character of the scheme.
- 3.20 Materials will be selected for their robustness and longevity, suitable for use in this exposed, verdant site, to ensure the scheme looks as good in 100 years’ time as at handover and requires a reduced amount of ongoing maintenance and more limited need for replacement of external features or finishes.

## LAYOUT

- 3.21 Following the farmstead narrative, the new dwellings are orientated and laid out to form something of an extension of South Close, albeit a central garden space will separate the two rows of dwellings rather than a new highway. The layout illustrates two simple terraces of homes facing onto a shared garden space, with each home having a south facing garden and a north facing yard. The yard allows porches to extend from the home to provide a sheltered space sufficient for dealing with some limited external storage and refuse requirements, without compromising the streetscene.
- 3.22 Formal entrances are formed on the northern elevations under deep porches whilst secondary access points provide access into the shared courtyard garden (for the northern row) or the southern landscaped area (for the southern row).
- 3.23 The site layout illustrates an area of parking in a discreet area to the western boundary which is to be supplemented with areas of landscaping and tree planting to soften its impact and provide an attractive environment. The large conifer trees located just off-site to the west present a particularly inhospitable location for either new housing or amenity space, and therefore utilising this area for car parking is an appropriate solution and relieves the centre of the site of the presence of the motor car, in line with co-housing principles.
- 3.24 A series of footpaths are proposed throughout the communal garden, connecting each dwelling with both the common house and the ancillary infrastructure noted above, reinforcing the sociable aspirations of the scheme. A footpath also meanders through the gathering space and play area, providing a convenient connection between both the common house and additional ancillary barn building.
- 3.25 A communal bin store is located to the west of the scheme, just south of the proposed access road from South Close, means that refuse vehicles will not be required to enter the site to collect any waste/recycling materials. Bicycle storage provision is also conveniently located at the site entrance.
- 3.26 The house types have been designed based on established typologies which will meet furniture requirements and other space standards, through a range of house type sizes. They are based on a form that has been used elsewhere to deliver energy efficient homes that make the most of passive solar gain, natural ventilation and natural daylighting strategies. They are wide frontage homes with

a shallow plan depth allowing for the ground floor living, kitchen and dining spaces to be dual aspect - benefiting from a warm south side, open to solar gain and a cooler aspect, north side. The large areas of glazing on the south facing elevations benefit from external timber brise soleil structures to ensure overheating in summer is avoided but admitting the welcome low angled sunlight in winter. In summer, cross ventilation can be achieved to draw air through the dual aspect spaces.

- 3.27 Further, more detailed information on the design and layout is contained within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

- 3.28 The scheme proposes an exemplary sustainable housing development which has been designed to consider sustainability with the very broadest principles, including the location of the scheme. The new homes will be built within the community where occupants already work and study, and the co-housing model allows for public spaces, landscapes and thresholds in and around the homes are designed to ensure that the new community formed is resilient whilst also supporting the wider community of Bishopston, Murton and the surrounding area. The site location also means that residents will be less reliant on vehicle use and will be encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. By promoting active travel, creating edible landscapes, and creating spaces that encourage social interaction and neighbourliness the scheme promotes healthy, sustainable lifestyles.
- 3.29 In terms of the design of the scheme itself, homes are designed with passive solar principles in mind, being more open to the south with larger areas of glazing for wintertime solar gain, timber “pergola” brise soleil and low, deep eaves, to prevent overheating in summertime, avoiding the need for carbon intensive mechanical cooling. Roofs also come down low over the north elevations, with smaller openings to reduce heat loss and to provide shelter from the elements under a full width porch. New homes have also been aligned with east to west ridge lines to ensure a generous area of south facing roofs, with the dormer structures predominantly located on the north side of the homes to keep the south facing roofs clear; offering potential for future PV installations.
- 3.30 The terrace style of housing also reduces thermal losses, and the building fabric is also highly insulated, ensuring an efficient building form. Whilst thick, well-insulated walls can lead to slightly larger overall building footprints, neither space nor energy are being wasted through multiple party walls required for detached and semi-detached house types. The sharing of party walls further reduced the overall embodied carbon through reducing material consumption, helping towards net zero aspirations.
- 3.31 Rainwater will be harvested in a number of large tanks across the site for use in the communal growing spaces, and growing food crops on site will further increase the self-sufficiency of the site protecting residents against shortages and price increases.
- 3.32 Thoughtful material and resource selection has been chosen to ensure that carbon consumption in extraction, production and transport of materials and services is minimised by supporting the local economy. Material selection will prioritise those with low embodied carbon to reduce the developments carbon dioxide usage in construction, and will be selected for their robustness and longevity.

## ACCESS AND PARKING

- 3.33 Vehicular access into the site is to be achieved from South Close, which appears to be an adopted highway which itself leads onto Bishopston Road to the west. The road will meander into the site via a gap to be formed in the hedgerow leading to a bank of car parking spaces (26 no.) which are to be formed along the western boundary.
- 3.34 As previously mentioned, one of the key aspirations is to achieve a scheme which prioritises shared spaces and values functional uses over extensive car access. Therefore, for the most part, cars will be dropped off in this parking area and residents will walk the short distance to their homes. A circular grassy track does however extend around the developable area, allowing residents to have direct

vehicular access to their properties for occasional and temporarily events such as delivery of heavy items etc.

- 3.35 In terms of quantum, the layout illustrates a provision of 26 vehicular spaces, equating to one space for both of the one bedroom bungalows and two spaces for each of the two and three bedroom houses. This is slightly above the perceived need of current occupiers and takes into account the sustainable credentials of the site. Further information in this respect, including details of the proposed access arrangements, is contained within the accompanying Transport Statement.
- 3.36 The scheme also includes provision for 48 cycle spaces, which equates to one cycle space per person on the site, which are to be located in proximity to the site entrance. Again, further information in this respect is contained within the accompanying Transport Statement.

## 4 Pre-application engagement

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- 4.1 Gwyr CLT have undergone extensive pre-application engagement prior to finalising the detailed proposals. This has included engagement with the local planning authority (“LPA”), the Design Commission for Wales (“DCfW”), and the local community as summarised below.

### LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT

#### First pre-application enquiry

- 4.2 A pre-application enquiry was submitted to Swansea Council in November 2022 for a scheme of the same scale and quantum, comprising a community housing project for 14 zero carbon homes. The layout submitted as part of the enquiry focused the residential and community uses to the north of the site, just south of Providence Lane, with the remainder of the land parcel being retained for landscape and green infrastructure purposes.
- 4.3 A suite of information was provided as part of that enquiry, including proposed architectural plans, a draft Design and Access Statement, engineering drawings, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, and an affordability statement.
- 4.4 Written feedback was received in April 2023, with the main topics of comment being grouped under three main themes, namely:
- Principle of development, including impact upon green infrastructure and landscape;
  - Loss of agricultural land; and
  - Affordable housing.
- 4.5 Other matters relating to placemaking, biodiversity, impact upon the Gower AONB, highway safety and transportation, PRowWs, sustainable drainage, and waste management, were also referred to.
- 4.6 The response revealed that the LPA had some reservations with the principle of development, noting concerns with regard to potential impacts upon green infrastructure assets and landscape setting. Concerns were also raised in relation to the loss of agricultural land, and the affordability of the proposals. The other matters discussed offered constructive advice which have informed the later proposals.

#### Second pre-application enquiry

- 4.7 A second pre-application enquiry was submitted to the LPA in November 2023, the purpose of which was to re-engage the council in discussions surrounding principle of development and technical matters, with further works being undertaken in the interim to respond to the LPA’s initial feedback.
- 4.8 The proposals submitted continued to relate to a community housing scheme of 14 zero carbon homes, but had redrawn the site layout with dwellings more central to the site, acting as an extension of South Close.
- 4.9 Further work was submitted in relation to landscape impact and agricultural land quality, and the revised site layout sought to respond to concerns previously raised, whilst further information was submitted concerning the CLT and the structure of the organisation and how the scheme will meet the definition of affordable housing.
- 4.10 A response was received from the LPA in June 2024, which concluded that further work would be required in order to confirm the principle of development, but significantly it was noted that a key issue for determination of the proposal will be the consideration of whether the application site affords ecosystem services of a value that would outweigh any potential losses. In particular, this would need to assess the agricultural and amenity value of the site, the importance of the PRowW, the importance of role of the site as part of the wider landscape, and the role of the site in preserving



the individual identities of separate neighbourhoods at Bishopston and Murton and preventing coalescence of the villages.

## DESIGN COMMISSION FOR WALES

### First DCfW presentation

- 4.11 The DCfW were first engaged with in February 2023, which involved the development team presenting the proposals to the panel. A written response followed at the end of February, which confirmed that the DCfW were supportive of the development of more co-operative housing in Wales, and specifically found the new model as a mechanism for delivering affordable housing to be interesting.
- 4.12 In principle, they were supportive of what the scheme seeks to achieve, but highlighted concerns raised by the LPA in terms of deliverability of new dwellings as affordable homes in perpetuity, the protected status of the green space, and the agricultural land quality.
- 4.13 In terms of design, the DCfW commented that the design deviations from the 'norm', such as the vehicular free central courtyard/common garden and detached location of car parking, needs to be explained and communicated effectively. Comments were also raised about the scale of the common garden, the need to consider future maintenance of these communal spaces, and to consider and review other co-housing schemes as practical working examples. Despite noting the clear benefits of, the DCfW noted practical considerations of potential for overheating of the southern elevations/windows together with the potential construction implications for self-build of the terraced house types, needs to be further considered. Finally, the advice questioned the layout and general design and if alternatives had been explored.
- 4.14 In summarising, the DCfW noted that they support the ambitions as a new model for sustainable communities in Wales and welcomed the opportunity for further engagement in the project.

### Second DCfW presentation

- 4.15 The DCfW were re-engaged with in October 2024. The updated presentation included explaining the community co-housing concept and GCLT's goals for the scheme, a review of the engagement held to date with the LPA and the feedback received, and reiterating the site context and constraints which have informed the site selection process, before moving on to explain the green infrastructure and landscape assessment work undertaken together with the details of the evolved design, including the adopted 'farmstead' design approach, house type/building designs, intended materials palette and energy/performance aspirations.
- 4.16 The DCfW once again confirmed their support of the principle, noting that the scheme offers a positive example of how a different approach to housebuilding can offer significant benefits, including more innovative, creative, sustainable and affordable homes.
- 4.17 The LPA once again noted that issues with the LPA remain to be resolved but questioned whether a higher density and more efficient use of the overall site could be considered not least given its location and connection to the community and the contribution it could make to future growth of the settlement. The DCfW made a number of other observations about the amended design and energy and performance ambitions and suggested a further reduction be considered to the level of car parking proposed (amongst other matters). In concluding the DCfW stated;

*'This scheme has the potential to create a high quality and sustainable development that is innovative, provides an alternative affordable housing model and creates a place that truly meets the needs of the residents and builds a strong community.'*

*The scheme has the potential to be an exemplar in the implementation of the placemaking aspirations in the Placemaking Wales Charter. However, the planning situation remains unresolved, with Local Planning Authority concern about the principle of development remaining, which is affecting the integration of the development with the surrounding villages and the realisation of the scheme's full potential. We encourage consideration of the wider potential of this area and the future of adjoining villages as part of the Local Development Plan review.*

*We encourage the Community Land Trust and their Design Team to build a clear and concise story that provides evidence to demonstrate the development is appropriate. Show how options for the location of development have been explored, how the design has evolved, how the proposal fits in the context and how it will meet the needs of the future residents and the wider community. Show how it can be an exemplar and replicable model for other parts of Wales.'*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.18 Following on from the process of community engagement undertaken by the applicant over the summer of 2023, the statutory Pre-Application Consultation ("PAC") has now been completed and is summarised within the accompanying Pre-Application Consultation Report.

## NON-STATUTORY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.19 In addition to the above, it should be acknowledged that the applicant also undertook an extensive process of community consultation over the summer of 2023, from end of June to the end of August. This involved a variety of events ranging from drop-in sessions, presentations and digital consultations. This initial stage of consultation has also inform the scheme design with comments received incorporated into the wider community landscape provisions and proposals, where possible. This initial stage of consultation has also helped publicise the proposal in terms of the more formal process which followed, as described above.

## 5 Planning policy framework

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- 5.1 The planning policy context for the determination of this application is provided by national and local planning policy guidance. National guidance is set out within Future Wales, Planning Policy Wales and its accompanying Technical Advice Notes. Local policy comprises the adopted Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025 (adopted 2019), and its supporting Supplementary Planning Guidance (“SPG”) documents.

### FUTURE WALES: THE NATIONAL PLAN 2040

- 5.2 Future Wales is Welsh Government’s top-tier national development framework. It is a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system over the next two decades, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.
- 5.3 It is a spatial strategy which does not seek to take decisions that are most appropriately taken at the regional or local level but does provide a strategic direction for all scales of planning and sets out policies and key issues to be taken forward at the regional scale. One of the key aims of the document is to address issues which Welsh Government consider to be a priority at this time, with affordable housing identified as a critically important issue throughout Wales.
- 5.4 The document follows a sequential structure, with each section building on the previous one as follows, ‘Wales: An Overview’, ‘Setting and achieving our ambitions’, ‘Strategic and Spatial Choices: Future Wales’ spatial strategy’ and ‘The Regions’.

#### Wales: An overview

- 5.5 This chapter provides a broad overview of the country and its intricacies. It is a very high-level overview of the country, however it identifies housing, particularly affordable housing, as a key issue to address throughout the country stating that *‘Good quality affordable homes are the bedrock of communities and form the basis for individuals and families to flourish in all aspects of their lives. Future Wales provides evidence of the need for housing across Wales at both a national and regional level. This evidence demonstrates the need for a focus on increasing the delivery of social and affordable homes.’*

#### Setting and achieving our ambitions

- 5.6 A focus of Future Wales is to provide quality development in the right places for the right reasons. 11 Future Wales Outcomes are set out within the chapter, which collectively are a statement of where Wales wants to be in 20 years. Every part of Future Wales is concerned with achieving these Outcomes.
- 5.7 Each Outcome commences with the prefix ‘A Wales where people live...’ building on the statement to provide a vision of Wales in 2040. Of particular relevance to the proposal are the following outcomes, all following the same prefix:

A Wales where people live:

1. ‘... and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places’.
3. ‘... in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth’.
7. ‘... in places where travel is sustainable’
9. ‘... in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution’
10. ‘... in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected eco-systems’ and
11. ‘... in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient’.

#### Strategic and Spatial Choices: Future Wales’ spatial strategy

- 5.8 One of the opening paragraphs of this section states that *'the spatial strategy supports the Future Wales Outcomes. Decisions taken at a national level, including Welsh Government investment choices, will reflect the principles of the strategy and make positive contributions towards the national placemaking objectives.'*
- 5.9 Cities and large towns are identified as the main development areas through co-locating homes, jobs and services in these areas, aiming to utilise untapped potential of places and their infrastructure. Among the places identified to achieve this growth, referred to as National Growth Areas is the Swansea Bay and Llanelli area, identified in Policy 1, *'Where Wales will grow'*, alongside Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys and Wrexham and Deeside. A total of 19 policies are identified within this chapter. These include *'Strategic Placemaking'*, *'Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration'*, and *'Delivering Affordable Homes'*, among others. The latter notes that providing homes in Wales at levels which meet our needs is a key priority and shift in delivery is required to meet this basic human need.

## The Regions

- 5.10 Regional planning will play an increasingly important role in the future, and this chapter provides a strategic vision for North, Mid Wales, South West and South East regions, focusing on large scale projects and less on housing, it is therefore of lesser relevance to the proposal.

## PLANNING POLICY WALES

- 5.11 Planning Policy Wales ("PPW") is the principal national planning policy documents which sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government against which development proposals should be assessed. The latest version is the twelfth edition, published in February 2024.
- 5.12 The main thrust of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. Placemaking lies at the heart of PPW, with policy and development management decisions required to seek to deliver development that adheres to these principles.
- 5.13 In a bid to ensure placemaking is prioritised, and in order to aid in implementing the Well-being of Future Generations Act, policy topics within PPW have been grouped under four themes, namely *'Strategic and Spatial Choices'*; *'Active and Social Places'*; *'Productive and Enterprising Places'*; and *'Distinctive and Natural Places'*. Each of the four headed chapters is supplemented by detailed and interwoven policy, which seek to work together in delivering sustainable places.
- 5.14 PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well-being of Wales and its communities. In this regard it seeks to achieve WG's well-being goals. All statutory bodies in Wales carrying out a planning function must exercise those functions with the principles of sustainable development as defined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Accordingly, paragraph 1.18 of PPW states emphatically that *'legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development'*.
- 5.15 Figure 4 of PPW covers the Key Planning Principles of WG in seeking to achieve *'the right development in the right place.'* Development proposals must seek to deliver development that addresses these outcomes, albeit paragraph 2.20 recognises that not all of these outcomes can necessarily be achieved under every development proposal.
- 5.16 Another Key Planning Principle of WG is facilitating accessible and healthy environments, stating later in Figure 4 that *'Our land use choices and the places we create should be accessible for all and support healthy lives. High quality places are barrier-free and inclusive to all members of society. They ensure everyone can live, work, travel and play in a way that supports good physical and mental health.'*
- 5.17 Creating and sustaining communities is a subsequent key planning principle, stating:  
*'The planning system must work in an integrated way to maximise its contribution to well-being. It can achieve this by creating well-designed places and cohesive rural and urban communities which can be sustained by ensuring the appropriate balance of uses and density, making places where people want to be and interact with others. Our communities need the right mix of good*

quality/well designed homes, jobs, services, infrastructure and facilities so that people feel content with their everyday lives.'

### Strategic and Spatial Choices

- 5.18 It is indicated within PPW that the first stage of the assessment of proposals must take place in respect of Strategic and Spatial Choices. In this regard it is stated that *'Effective strategic placemaking requires early collective consideration of placemaking issues at the outset... when developing specific proposals.'*
- 5.19 Paragraphs 3.3 through to 3.18 of PPW highlights the importance of good design in *'creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise'*. To achieve good design development, proposals need to meet the five overarching aims of design which comprise of access, character, community safety, environmental sustainability, and movement.
- 5.20 Paragraph 3.6 states that *'Development proposals must address the issues of inclusivity and accessibility for all. This includes making provision to meet the needs of people with sensory, memory, learning and mobility impairments, older people and people with young children. There will often be wider benefits to be gained through the sensitive consideration of such provision, for example, whilst the presence of visual cues will be invaluable in assisting those with hearing loss to engage in a noisy environment, a navigable environment will benefit all. Good design can also encourage people to meet and interact with each other, helping to address issues surrounding loneliness. Good design must also involve the provision of measures that help to reduce the inequality of access to essential services, education and employment experienced by people without access to a car. Design measures and features should enable easy access to services by walking, cycling and public transport.'*
- 5.21 Accessibility is covered between paragraphs 3.49 to 3.52, wherein it is stated that the overarching aim of spatial strategies should be minimising the need to travel, reducing reliance on the private car, and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- 5.22 PPW seeks to ensure that proposals achieve a broad balance between housing, community facilities, services, and employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas should be promoted to minimise the need for long distance commuting. Major generators of travel demand, such as housing, employment, retailing, leisure and recreation, and community facilities should be sited within existing urban areas or areas which are, or can be, easily reached by walking or cycling, and are well served by public transport.
- 5.23 At paragraph 3.55 PPW advocates a strong preference for bringing forward brownfield land stating *'Previously developed (also referred to as brownfield) land (see definition overleaf) should, wherever possible, be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development. In settlements, such land should generally be considered suitable for appropriate development where its re-use will promote sustainability principles and any constraints can be overcome. It is recognised, however, that not all previously developed land is suitable for development. This may be, for example, because of its unsustainable location, the presence of protected species or valuable habitats or industrial heritage, or because it is highly contaminated.'*
- 5.24 At paragraph 3.60 PPW considers development in the countryside stating ***'Development in the countryside should be located within and adjoining those settlements*** where it can best be accommodated in terms of infrastructure, access, habitat and landscape conservation. ***Infilling or minor extensions to existing settlements may be acceptable***, in particular where ***they meet a local need for affordable housing*** or it can be demonstrated that the proposal will increase local economic activity.'
- 5.25 PPW indicates at paragraphs 3.61-3.63 that development should be located so that it can be well serviced by existing or planned infrastructure.

### Active and Social Places

- 5.26 A key theme of PPW is creating places that are active and social, this includes sustainable transport provision for housing development. The opening paragraphs to this chapter include the following aspiration of PPW:

*'New development should prevent problems from occurring or getting worse such as the shortage of affordable homes, the reliance on the private car and the generation of carbon emissions.'*

- 5.27 PPW places importance on locating development so as to minimise the need to travel and increasing accessibility by modes other than the private car.
- 5.28 In terms of car parking paragraph 4.1.51 indicates that *'A design-led approach to the provision of car parking should be taken, which ensures an appropriate level of car parking is integrated in a way which does not dominate the development. Parking provision should be informed by the local context, including public transport accessibility, urban design principles and the objective of reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Planning authorities must support schemes which keep parking levels down.'*
- 5.29 In respect of housing, WG recognises the importance of a home to people's lives and indicates that the planning system must:
- *'identify a supply of land to support the delivery of the housing requirement to meet the differing needs of communities across all tenures;*
  - *enable provision of a range of well-designed, energy efficient, good quality market and affordable housing that will contribute to the creation of sustainable places; and*
  - *focus on the delivery of the identified housing requirement and the related land supply.'*
- 5.30 Paragraph 4.2.5 states that *'Planning authorities should plan for a mix of market and affordable housing types to meet the requirement and specifically consider the differing needs of their communities.'*
- 5.31 Paragraph 4.2.26 states that *'a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which must be taken into account in formulating development plan policies and determining relevant planning applications.'*
- 5.32 Paragraph 4.2.14 the need for diversity in housing delivery options is discussed stating *'When allocating sites, planning authorities need to consider providing a range of sustainable and deliverable sites to allow all sectors and types of house-builder, including nationals, regionals, registered social landlords (RSLs), Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and the custom and self-build sector, the opportunity to contribute to delivering the proposed housing requirement.'*[emphasis added]. PPW continues at 4.2.5 *'To assist in broadening the housing delivery options and enable the provision of housing by RSLs, SMEs and the custom and self-build sector, planning authorities should set a locally determined target for the delivery of housing on small sites. To facilitate this, planning authorities should maintain a register of suitable sites which fall below the threshold for allocation in their development plan.'*

### **Productive and Enterprising Places**

- 5.33 This section relates primarily to economic development, tourism, infrastructure, the rural economy, energy, and waste, and is thus less applicable to this proposal.

### **Distinctive and Natural Places**

- 5.34 This chapter of PPW covers a range of topics, including cultural heritage matters, natural assets, and environmental quality. The opening statement of the chapter states that: *'Development proposals should be formulated to look to the long-term protection and enhancement of the special characteristics and intrinsic qualities of places...Problems should be prevented from occurring or getting worse. Biodiversity loss should be reversed, pollution reduced, environmental risks addressed and overall resilience of ecosystems improved.'*
- 5.35 Paragraph 6.2.1 relates to Green Infrastructure and notes that *'at a local scale, [green infrastructure] might comprise parks, fields, public rights of way, allotments, cemeteries and gardens. At smaller scales, individual urban interventions such as street trees, hedgerows, roadside verges, and green roofs/walls can all contribute to green infrastructure networks.'* Green infrastructure provides multiple benefits for social, economic and cultural as well as environmental resilience. These

benefits are important in domestic environments where they can facilitate health and well-being related benefits.

- 5.36 At paragraph 6.2.9 PPW states *'Planning authorities must encourage the appropriate management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna in order to complement and improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network<sup>114</sup>. The features concerned are those which, because of their linear and continuous structure or their function as 133 'stepping stones' or 'wildlife corridors', are essential for migration, dispersal or genetic exchange. The development of networks of statutory and non-statutory sites and of the landscape features which provide links from one habitat to another can make an important contribution to ecosystem resilience and the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and the quality of the local environment, including enabling adaptation to climate change.'*
- 5.37 Paragraph 6.4.4 states *'All reasonable steps must be taken to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems and these should be balanced with the wider economic and social needs of business and local communities.'*

## TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTES

- 5.38 The following Technical Advice Notes ("TANs") are considered to be of relevance in the consideration of these proposals.
- TAN 2 – Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)
  - TAN 12 – Design (2016)
  - TAN 18 – Transport (2007)
- 5.39 TAN 2, published in June 2006, is of relevance to affordable housing developments, providing practical guidance on the role of the planning system in delivering affordable housing.
- 5.40 TAN 12 relates to Design and was updated in March 2016. It provides advice and information on a number of related areas including the definition of design for planning purposes; design considerations in planning decisions; and local planning authority design policy and advice.
- 5.41 TAN 18, which was published in March 2007, deals with Transport matters, and advocates locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling; generally advocating development at sustainable sites.

## WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 5.42 The Well-being of Future Generations Act imposes a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development in accordance with the sustainable development principles, and to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Its content is sought to be delivered through the planning system via the intertwining of the Act through PPW.

## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 5.43 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that decisions in relation to planning applications should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the area comprises the Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025 (adopted 2019).



- 5.44 The site is within the settlement boundary as defined by the LDP, but is otherwise not subject to any designations as shown on the proposals and constraints map. The pre-application response received from the LPA does however confirm that the site is considered to be an important green space for green infrastructure, and should therefore be reviewed in the context of Policy ER 2 (Strategic green infrastructure network).
- 5.45 Given the nature of the proposals, and the site context, the following policies are considered to be key to the assessment of this application:

<b>LDP POLICY</b>	<b>RELATING TO</b>
Policy PS1	Sustainable places
Policy PS2	Placemaking and place management
Policy PS3	Sustainable housing strategy
Policy H2	Affordable housing strategy
Policy H3	On site affordable housing
Policy H6	100% Affordable Housing Exception Sites
Policy SI1	Health and well-being
Policy SI2	Providing and safeguarding community facilities and locally important uses
Policy SI5	Protection of open space
Policy SI6	Provision of new open space
Policy SI8	Community safety
Policy ER1	Climate change
Policy ER2	Strategic green infrastructure network
Policy ER4	Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Policy ER5	Landscape protection
Policy ER11	Trees, hedgerows and development
Policy T2	Active travel
Policy T6	Parking
Policy T7	Public rights of way and recreational routes
Policy EU2	Renewable and low carbon energy in new development



- 5.46 The policies most pertinent to the development proposals are summarised below but it should be noted that all policies above have been reviewed as part of this application process.
- 5.47 **Policy PS1** relates to sustainable places and states that the delivery of new homes and community facilities must comply with the sustainable settlement strategy that requires development to be directed to the most sustainable locations within defined settlement boundaries, and new homes to be delivered in a manner consistent with growth forecasts and the Plan's Sustainable Housing and Employment Strategies. It notes that inappropriate development in the countryside will be resisted.
- 5.48 **Policy PS2** states that development should enhance the quality of places and spaces and respond positively to aspects of local context and character that contribute to a sense of place. All proposals should ensure that no significant adverse impacts would be caused to people's amenity. Development should also, among other things, have regard to important elements of landscape, ensure neighbourhoods benefit from an appropriate diversity of land uses and community facilities, integrate effectively with the County's network of multi-functional open spaces and enhance the green infrastructure network, provide an accessible environment for all, deliver new and/or enhance existing connections to essential social infrastructure and community facilities, and avoid the loss of land that should be retained for its existing use or as an area of open space.
- 5.49 **Policy PS3** identifies a housing requirement of 15,600 dwellings for the Plan period. It states the Sustainable Housing Strategy is based on a number of approaches to housing delivery, including supporting windfall residential development at appropriate sites within settlements, focusing on the re-use of previously developed land.
- 5.50 **Policy H2** identifies the need to deliver a minimum of 3,310 affordable homes over the Plan period, including through on-site provision of such housing as part of residential schemes where appropriate and viable, and by providing a policy framework for determining 100% affordable housing exception sites.
- 5.51 **Policy H3** relates to residential developments on sites within defined settlements, and states that within defined settlement boundaries in the Gower and Gower Fringe Strategic Housing Policy Zone, schemes of more than two dwellings should provide 50% affordable housing.
- 5.52 **Policy H6** sets out criteria for consideration of exceptions sites within or adjoining existing settlements. It relates to residential proposals on sites within or adjoining existing settlements where 100% of the proposed dwellings are for affordable housing for local needs. It states such proposals will be permitted where the site represents a logical extension to the existing settlement and is of a scale appropriate to and in keeping with the character of the settlement and is in a sustainable location having reasonable access to at least a basic range of services. It also required proposals to be of a size, scale and design compatible with affordable dwelling standards and available to low or moderate income groups, and there are binding agreements in place to ensure that the initial affordability benefits will be retained in perpetuity for all successive occupiers who meet the Councils' criteria.
- 5.53 **Policy S11** concerns health and well-being, stating that development proposals should encourage healthy lifestyles by creating sustainable places that accord with placemaking principles, are supported by appropriate social infrastructure and community facilities with good interconnectivity between places and land uses, and maintain or enhance the extent, quality and connectivity of green infrastructure networks.
- 5.54 **Policy S12** states that new community facilities must be accessible by Active Travel and public transport, and be conveniently located in relation to other facilities and services wherever possible.
- 5.55 **Policy S15** states that development will not be permitted on areas of open space unless it meets the relevant policy tests.

- 5.56 **Policy SI6** requires open space to be sought for all residential development proposals of more than 10 units, including the creation of new on-site facilities. All residential development proposals must ensure that residential areas prioritise the ability of residents, particularly children, to move freely, socialise and play, design natural landscaping to create opportunities for informal play, and ensure that play and leisure spaces are focal spaces and well overlooked by development.
- 5.57 **Policy SI8** states that development must be designed to promote safe and secure communities and minimise the opportunity for crime.
- 5.58 **Policy ER2** refers to a strategic green infrastructure network, and states that green infrastructure will be provided through the protection and enhancement of existing green spaces that afford valuable ecosystem services. Development that comprises the integrity of such spaces, and therefore that of the overall green infrastructure network, will not be permitted. It states that development will be required to take opportunities to maintain and enhance the extent, quality and connectivity of the multi-functional green infrastructure network, and where appropriate:
- Create new interconnected areas of green infrastructure between the proposed site and the existing strategic network;
  - Fill gaps in the existing network to improve connectivity; and
  - In instances where loss of green infrastructure is unavoidable, provide mitigation and compensation for the lost assets.
- 5.59 **Policy ER4** concerns the Gower AONB, stating that development within the designation must have regard to the purpose of the designation to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.
- 5.60 **Policy ER5** states that development will not be permitted that would have a significant adverse effect on the character and quality of the landscape of the county.
- 5.61 **Policy T2** relates to active travel and states that developments must take opportunities to enhance walking and cycling access by incorporating permeable, legible, direct, convenient, attractive and safe routes within the scheme that connect the development to surrounding facilities. Developments should also involve improvements, connections, and or extensions to existing PROWs. It also states that developments must not have a significant adverse impact on PROWs.
- 5.62 **Policy T6** notes that proposals must be served by appropriate parking provision, in accordance with the maximum standards. In instances where those standards are judged not to be appropriate, the development is required to provide a financial contribution towards alternative transport measures where appropriate. Secure cycle parking is also required for all major developments.
- 5.63 **Policy T7** relates specifically to PROWs, stating that development that significantly adversely affects the character, safety, enjoyment and convenient use of a PROW will only be permitted where an acceptable alternative route is identified and provided. Linkages, and where appropriate extensions, to the existing PROW network will be expected from all new developments, which must have regard to the existing character of the PROW and the aspiration to improve access for all.

## SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPG)

- 5.64 The following SPG documents are applicable in consideration of the proposed development:
- Placemaking Guidance for the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (October 2021);
  - Biodiversity and development (February 2021);
  - Trees, hedgerow and woodlands (October 2021);
  - Placemaking guidance for residential development (October 2021);
  - Planning obligations (March 2010); and
  - Parking standards (March 2012).

## 6 Appraisal

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- 6.1 This section of the statement seeks to appraise the key planning considerations, with the aim of demonstrating the suitability of the site for a residential scheme of this nature. As required by section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement therefore aims to identify the relevant development plan policies and material considerations which will influence the decision-making process, and more importantly, this appraisal will demonstrate how all pertinent development management considerations have been duly considered and addressed in the formation of the final proposal.

### PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

#### Housing

- 6.2 The proposed development is for a community housing project comprising 14 near zero carbon homes to meet local housing need within the community. The provision of a 100% affordable housing scheme exceeds the policy requirement identified at Policy H3, which seeks 50% affordable housing provision to be delivered on residential developments within defined settlements. This provision is a significant increase on the policy requirement and therefore will help contribute to the established affordable housing requirement noted at Policy H2.
- 6.3 The provision of 100% affordable housing aligns with the aspirations of Policy H6 as noted earlier, which seeks to achieve wholly affordable schemes where they are to be delivered on sites within or adjoining existing settlements.
- 6.4 The Gwyr CLT are also intending to deliver these dwellings as collective self-build approach, or at the very least allow this as an option for all members with capacity to contribute through sweat equity, following a similar model other CLTs within the UK have successfully implemented. Although not a traditional mechanism for delivering affordable housing, PPW now recognises the role of both community-led housing and self and custom build housing make in contributing to housing requirements for local communities.

#### Community uses

- 6.5 As a community housing project, the residential components are centred around communal gardens and shared facilities, which includes a common house and ancillary structures comprising gathering space, a workshop, and gardening infrastructure. The layout ensures that the communal facilities are well located for residents' use, and also promotes a sense of safety with dwellings overlooking these spaces as per Policy SI6. Going above and beyond these policy requirements, the development has been designed to provide a scheme which is centred around community functions and uses for both future and existing residents. As explained above and demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement, the scheme prioritises pedestrian movements and seeks to incorporate community functions in with the residential components.
- 6.6 The central communal courtyard is primarily for residents' use, and occupants will be encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles in accordance with Policy SI1 by promoting community growing facilities and offering convenient pedestrian and cycle connections.
- 6.7 A large portion of the community facilities are intended to be more publicly accessible, providing benefits to existing residents of Bishopston and Murton who will be able to enjoy the 3.6 acres of enhanced landscape and open spaces, in compliance with Policy SI1. The site and indeed these facilities will be accessible a short walking distance from the other facilities in Bishopston and Murton as per Policy SI2, and likewise, future residents will be able to sustainably access these existing facilities from the site.
- 6.8 The site is located within a defined settlement boundary and is evidently sustainably located in terms of close proximity to a range of local services, facilities, and public transport opportunities. The residential use of the site is therefore appropriate in this context with the considered design,

landscape and shared community provision clearly helping to knit the development into the village and immediate landscape setting (further expanded upon within the sections below). The cohousing principles adopted by Gwyr CLT offer a range of benefits compared to more standard housing developments, both for occupiers and the wider community, which further supports the principle.

### Land use policy

- 6.9 It is acknowledged that PPW advocates the preference for use of previously used land over greenfield sites. However, PPW does also acknowledge that consideration should be given to suitable and sustainable greenfield sites within or on the edge of settlements where no viable previously used or underutilised sites exist. In this instance the applicant has demonstrated that a search for alternative sites within and around the settlement has been undertaken and has found that there is no better suited land available. This has included a review of the agricultural land quality of surrounding greenfield sites, which has confirmed that there is no worse quality agricultural land which would be suitable for development. This exercise is included within the accompanying Site Constraints Report, which considers the wide variety of landscape, heritage, biodiversity and other such constraints and is also reproduced within the Design and Access Statement.
- 6.10 The greenfield land parcel forms part of a wider green area which sits central to the Bishopston and Murton settlement. Crucially it is observed that the site is not afforded any direct protection through the LDP Proposals or Constraints Map for landscape or ecological reasons, however it is acknowledged that the LDP identifies it as an example forming part of a wider area of green space. Notwithstanding this, it does not benefit from being part of any strategic green infrastructure assessment, and therefore the impact of the proposals on the character and ecosystem resilience of the wider area of open space needs to be considered.

### Housing need

- 6.11 When considering the principle of development, it is relevant to consider the justification and necessity of the scheme. In this regard, the Welsh Government have reiterated their support for affordable homes and are encouraging the delivery of “*every additional home possible*”. Swansea specifically has experienced a significant shortfall of housing delivery over recent years, having delivered only 48% of the annual average housing requirement over the past 12 years. This significant need for new housing at both national and local level has driven the development proposals, which proposes a scheme of 100% affordable housing. Policy H6 of the LDP is worded to make provision for such circumstances, relating to sites within or adjoining existing settlements which promote 100% affordable housing. It specifically seeks to permit schemes which represent logical extensions to a settlement where they are for genuine affordable needs, which this scheme seeks to achieve through provision of housing which directly responds to the needs of the local community.
- 6.12 Accordingly, it is asserted that the consideration of the site for residential use, in land use policy terms, is fully justified and accords with driving principles of the development plan, together with national policy. Notwithstanding this, it is appreciated that the principle of the proposal is also linked to the consideration of matters such as loss of green infrastructure, net biodiversity benefits, landscape impact and loss of best and most versatile agricultural land. For ease of reference consideration of these specific matters is set out under separate headings below.

## LANDSCAPE, GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, AND BIODIVERSITY

- 6.13 It is recognised that the site sits with a wider area of green space located centrally within the settlement and forming a multifunctional space which contributes to the wider area through a number of ecosystem services. The following section of this report intends to consider these matters in more detail, taking into account of the requirements of Policies PS2 and ER2, whilst also then considering landscape and biodiversity considerations explicitly.

- 6.14 Section 7 of the supporting Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy provides a detailed assessment of the ecosystem services both of the existing site and the contribution it makes and proposed development, both in construction and operational phases.
- 6.15 The existing site is currently used for agricultural purposes which is limited to grass cropping. The field parcel is disconnected from wider agricultural operations which marginalises the formal use, something which is compounded by the PRoW, close proximity to adjacent housing and the propensity for dog fouling. The parcel itself does nonetheless make a contribution towards the wider area of green space contributing to the overall landscape and visual quality, albeit the site in itself is well contained with limited views from wider vantage points. Furthermore, whilst the site forms part of a network of fields which provides separation between the developed western and eastern extent of the overall settlement, it only offers a limited function in this respect.
- 6.16 It is acknowledged that during construction there would be some degree of adverse effects on the landscape and GI consideration, reducing the amenity value of the site during that period. However, post construction, the scheme redefines the remaining areas of the field into areas with various positive uses; concentrating on productive food growing and biodiversity enhancements. The accompanying Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy considers these aspects in more detail and demonstrates that, as a result of the proposed development, the site and wider area would benefit from a net improvement to the overall ecosystem services.
- 6.17 As explained earlier, it is considered that the applicant has investigated all other alternative opportunities, and no better suited sites exist to serve the identified needs within the community. Furthermore, when considering the delivery of much needed affordable near zero carbon housing, coupled with the extensive ecosystem service enhancements that the scheme will deliver, it is considered that the development complies with the requirements of both policy PS2 and ER2. Whilst there are undoubtedly likely to be some detrimental effects of the development, primarily during the construction process, including visual landscape impact and loss of grade 3a agricultural land, these are considered to be more than outweighed by the significant benefits of the scheme.
- 6.18 Turning specifically to landscape effects, the characteristics of the site and surrounding area are such that the site is not heavily overlooked from external viewpoints, principally limited to the site itself and positions along the adjacent PRoW. Whilst other viewpoints exist from surrounding properties these are not considered to be particularly sensitive due to intervening vegetation and the potential to augment with screen planting.
- 6.19 In conclusion the assessment confirms that the development will not result in any material adverse landscape or visual impact issues, especially when considering the positive contribution to be made through the design and environmental enhancements that will add to the landscape and local visual interest.
- 6.20 All required ecological assessments of the site have been completed in liaison with the County ecologist. The surveys have confirmed that the majority of the site is formed by semi-improved neutral grassland bound by hedgerows and trees which define the perimeter. An area of Japanese knotweed has also been identified adjacent to the PRoW along Providence Lane. The tree survey completed has identified five tree specimens and nine groups of trees with two individual trees (an ash and sycamore) recommended for removal along with a group of ash trees.
- 6.21 As part of the scheme proposals there will be a loss of semi-improved grassland and scattered scrub and grassland, together with a length of hedgerow to facilitate the access. However, the loss of the dense/scattered scrub and rough grassland also includes the removal of some areas of Japanese knotweed, which can be considered an enhancement to the site. Furthermore, alongside the extensive length of retained hedgerow/trees and semi-improved grassland, many more habitats will be created within the scheme as part of the extensive enhancement landscape proposals. In particular, these include enhanced grassland, swales, pond, pond edge scrub, orchard, two types of proposed new hedges, hedge borders, orchard grassland and the woodland coppice areas. Together with other areas of varied non-native planting, community growing areas, the installation of bat and bird boxes and the planting of significant numbers of trees, we consider this to represent a significant net benefit for biodiversity across the site. This is clearly not only beneficial for the site

but offers considerable benefits to both the wider green infrastructure assets but also the existing community.

- 6.22 Further details are set out within the accompanying Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy, together with the supporting ecological assessments which prescribe other considerate site clearance, construction and mitigation measures, together with the management strategy, which are envisaged will be secured via suitably worded condition(s) on any planning permission which may be granted.

## AGRICULTURAL LAND

- 6.23 An Agricultural Land Quality and Considerations report prepared by Kernon Countryside Consultants Ltd confirms that the site falls within subgrade 3a, and therefore falls within the best and most versatile land classification. Most of the land surrounding Bishopston and Murton is also identified as falling with grade 2, which is of higher and better quality than the site.
- 6.24 PPW does not generally support development of best and most versatile land, unless there is an overriding need for the development and other land is unavailable. As demonstrated in the DAS and Site Constraints Report, other potential development sites have been considered but much of the land surrounding Bishopston and Murton is constrained by statutory and non-statutory landscape designations, including the Gower AONB, a SSSI, and a SAC.
- 6.25 As has been demonstrated, there is a demand for affordable housing in this part of Swansea and the proposed development specifically responds to the identified need of Bishopston and Murton. Although other development sites have been considered, there is no more suitable, lesser quality agricultural land available within the surrounding settlement. Furthermore, it is considered that the relatively minor loss is somewhat compensated through the benefits to be delivered through the scheme which includes community orchard, growing space and other biodiversity and recreational benefits, over and above the existing situation.

## DESIGN AND AMENITY

- 6.26 The proposed scheme by Pentan Architects has been designed to portray a farmstead like narrative, with a more dense cluster of buildings centred around the common garden to make the best use of land, allowing a mixture of growing and community spaces around the periphery. This approach strives to respond to the semi-rural edge of the built form, allowing the new development to assimilate into the wider open landscape beyond.
- 6.27 Built development has deliberately been kept away from the northern site boundary to ensure that the setting of the lane and the PRow retains its open feel and appearance. The layout is formed around a rectangular courtyard of buildings, detached blocks and short terraces, which lead from the access from South Close providing vistas through and into the development and forming coherent and legible route into the site and surrounding areas. The proposed car parking area, described in greater detail below, has been located along the western boundary, setting the new dwellings slightly away from existing houses and the mature vegetation along this boundary. The northern, eastern, and southern boundaries have been kept more open, with a variety of landscaping features wrapped around the main built form to, soften the visual impact of the scheme and help integrate it into the immediate landscape.
- 6.28 The scheme prioritises valuable functional uses and shared spaces, however, an element of independence remains with the new dwellings proposed offering private useable amenity space as shown on the site layout. It is considered that this, coupled with the shared provisions in the form of the common garden, will meet the needs of the future occupiers.
- 6.29 The scale and layout of the development has been considered to minimise impact upon the privacy and amenity consideration of neighbouring properties. Standard separation and privacy distance have been exceeded and the orientation and scale of the buildings further helps to avoid any unacceptable impact in this respect.



- 6.30 Existing neighbours/members of the public will also benefit from improved access into the field and connections onto the PRow routes through the new pedestrian links proposed through the site. The scheme makes provision for new communal open space and recreational facilities, which will also be of benefit to both future residents and existing neighbouring occupiers alike.

## TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

- 6.31 Shared spaces and community infrastructure are prioritised over accommodating private car use within cohousing schemes and therefore the scheme has been designed to allow residents to access their properties via a grassy track when needed, but for the most part it is expected that residents will park their cars at a parking area to the northwest of the site. The Transport Statement demonstrates how the short walk to new dwellings from the parking area is achievable whilst ensuring that there is also an option to access dwellings, if/when needed.
- 6.32 Access into the site is to be taken via South Close, with minor modification required to the access point into the site. This is considered in more detail within the accompanying Transport Statement which confirms its suitability for such use and also demonstrates that safe access can be achieved for emergency vehicles.
- 6.33 The parking provision responds to the LPAs aspiration for “maximum” standards at Policy T6, providing an acceptable 26 spaces for the scheme. Suitable and sufficient cycle provision can also be achieved, with a secure storage facility conveniently located at the site entrance.
- 6.34 The proposed landscape planting and enhanced public open space areas will also visually enhance the PRowS which extend along the northern and eastern site boundaries, ensuring that the character of these routes are not adversely affected by the proposals, in accordance with Policy T7.

## DRAINAGE AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

- 6.35 Foul drainage is to be achieved through connection to the existing public sewer. No objections have been raised by DCWW on the grounds related to foul connections or water supply.
- 6.36 In terms of surface water the drainage strategy will involve runoff from roof areas and hardstanding to be managed via small scale SuDS features, including private raingardens and soakaways which will be located within the communal play area and the southern side of proposed dwellings. Water butts are also proposed to store water for reuse within the gardens. Attenuation will also be provided via permeable paving and detention basins, as required. The scheme has been designed to accommodate a 1-in-100 year rainfall event, with an additional 40% allowance for increased rainfall intensity due to climate change, demonstrating that the scheme has been considered and can suitably accommodate the necessary drainage requirements.
- 6.37 A separate SAB application will be pursued and submitted in due course.

## OTHER MATTERS

### Section 106 legal agreement

- 6.38 It is acknowledged that the local planning authority are likely to require a legal agreement to ensure that the houses remain affordable in perpetuity. It is also noted that this is a requirement of Policy H6, which requires there to be binding agreement in place to ensure that the initial affordability benefits will be retained in perpetuity for all successive occupiers who meet the Council's occupancy criteria. As is typically the case for such matters, the applicant will look to engage with the LPA on this through the appraisal process, with the aim of preparing and completing the legal agreement prior to determination of the application.
- 6.39 There have been previous discussions surrounding the potential need for financial contributions to primary and secondary education, this is set out within the most recent pre-application enquiry response. However, Swansea Council School Admissions department have more recently confirmed that surplus capacity exists in both age category schools, given the existing number of pupils on roll and the estimated capacity of these schools. Furthermore, Highways have indicated for a potential

for a contribution request for £12,500 towards active travel and EV charging. The scheme is making provision for both within the design and it has not been clarified where the monies would be spent and how it is justified.

- 6.40 As such and in the absence of any evidence to suggest otherwise, it is not considered that any financial contributions would be required to make the scheme acceptable, not least given the fact that the scheme will deliver much needed affordable housing and significant benefits to the community.

### **Planning History**

- 6.41 It is noted that several planning decisions have been cited both through discussions with the LPA and through PAC process, relating to different proposals and relating to different sites within the vicinity, including a recently dismissed appeal on land to the north of the application site (Appeal Ref CAS-02774-X5M6X2). Whilst this appeal decision recognises the need to consider the requirements of policy ER2, it is noted that that the dismissed appeal scheme made little to no attempt to appraise the green infrastructure considerations, landscape or biodiversity matters. Furthermore, the application proposal and indeed mitigation included herein is so materially different to the dismissed appeal that it makes comparison between the two very difficult. As such, the LPA are reminded that each and every planning application must be appraised on its merits, recognising the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

### **SUMMARY CONCLUSION**

- 6.42 The key factors relevant to the principle of development relate to the location of the site at the edge of the existing built form within the settlement boundary, the site search and selection process, the provision of affordable housing, and the loss of BMV agricultural land. As has been demonstrated throughout the Site Constraints Report and indeed this Planning Statement, a thorough site selection process has been undertaken to arrive at the selection of this site at Providence Lane and South Close for this community-led affordable housing scheme. Most pertinent to the principle of development, the scheme has been assessed against the criteria of Policy H6, whereby the settlement location of the site and the provision of 100% affordable housing supports the delivery of such schemes.
- 6.43 The principle of the proposal is subject to other material considerations being acceptable, in which regard, it has been demonstrated that the development will not result in any overriding adverse landscape or visual impact issues, especially when considering the positive contribution to be made through the design and environmental enhancements. Such enhancements will add to the landscape and local visual interest, and will be able to offer green infrastructure enhancements through various provisions to be implemented as part of the scheme. The design and layout of the scheme has sought to respond to the edge of built form location of the site, and there are no anticipated highways or engineering issues which would have an unacceptable impact on future or existing residents.
- 6.44 The application is supported by the necessary supporting surveys, reports and assessments which are required to appropriately consider the key issues and demonstrate the acceptability of the scheme in planning terms. All material considerations have been addressed, and it should be noted that some technical matters have been covered elsewhere in other documentation, as set out above.
- 6.45 On balance, it is considered that the nature of the proposals and the wider community benefits that they would offer, tip the planning balance in favour of supporting this scheme. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is some harm to the landscape and there will be some loss of green space and BMV land, the scheme provides 100% affordable housing which has specifically been designed to cater for needs of the local community, and offers a mix of shared community facilities which will be of benefit to existing residents and future occupiers alike. Summarily the merits of the scheme in terms of affordable housing provision and community benefits, clearly outweigh any potential harm to the landscape, green space and BMV agricultural land.



## 7 Conclusion

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- 7.1 This Planning Statement is produced in support of proposals for a community housing project comprising 14 near zero carbon homes which will include eight three-bedroom dwellings, four two-bedroom dwellings, and two one-bedroom dwellings to meet local housing need within the community, in addition to generous public open space and community infrastructure, vehicle and bicycle parking, sustainable drainage, and associated works.
- 7.2 The principle of development is established by virtue of the site's location with the defined settlement boundary and its sustainability credentials. The scheme looks to deliver 100% affordable housing which exceeds the local policy requirement and will use near zero-carbon collective self-build housing approach as an innovative means of contributing to local affordable housing, helping to address shortfalls in provision over recent years.
- 7.3 The robust landscaping proposals demonstrated in the work prepared by Macgregor Smith illustrate how the site constraints and landscape considerations have influenced the final design, ensuring that the scheme can be developed for housing without adverse impact to the open character of the site.
- 7.4 Wellbeing goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFGA) are adhered to through this application in that there would be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of such objectives as a result of the implementation of the scheme. The latest edition of PPW brings the objectives of the Act into clearer focus in a planning context, thus through compliance with PPW, adherence to the WFGA is demonstrated.
- 7.5 In conclusion, the proposal offers an exciting opportunity to provide much needed affordable homes at Bishopston and Murton to address a known local need within the community. The development promotes community cohesion, social inclusion, healthy lifestyles and active travel, whilst exceeding building regulations in terms of sustainable construction and energy performance targets. The development has the ambition to be exemplar in design, forming a replicable template for other such developments in Wales and on this basis, it is respectfully requested that Swansea Council upholds the policies of the Development Plan and recommends the application for approval.

**LRM Planning**  
**November 2024**

## Appendix 1. Assessment of the scheme against the Well-being goals of the Future Generations Act

WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT GOALS	RESPONSE
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b></p> <p>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing fair work.</p>	<p>The co-housing model adopts sustainable principles from the outset, starting from the location of the site itself, through to the design, construction and operation of the development. It recognises and responds to the site context and seeks to make efficient use of the land, offering residents a place to live which is conveniently and sustainably located where they already live and study. The site's location allows future residents to access and support local services and facilities, promoting economic sustainability of the local area.</p> <p>The scheme includes community growing spaces which will allow the land to be used productively, and as well as enhancing biodiversity and promoting amenity benefits, there will be wider health and wellbeing benefits to the residents.</p> <p>The model also focuses on utilising local workforces and workforces through the construction of the scheme, and during operation, the GCLT are committed to using local labour to assist with the ongoing maintenance of the scheme.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b></p> <p>A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.</p>	<p>The residential and community uses are embedded into the landscape and green infrastructure strategy of the site, enhancing it whilst also promoting the functionality of the outdoor spaces for future and existing residents of Bishopston and Murton use. The scheme makes provision for significant biodiversity and open space enhancements for the community by maximising opportunities to retain key features, providing public access and supplementing this through the inclusion of a number of new provisions including woodland coppice, pond, community orchard, growing areas, enhanced grassland/pedestrian walks, natural play and recreation space. It will offer a net biodiversity benefit constituting an overall enhancement while safeguard ecological value through the construction process.</p>
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b></p> <p>A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic circumstances)</p>	<p>The co-housing model seeks to provide housing which is genuinely affordable and will remain affordable to local people in perpetuity, providing houses for people not for profit. The community led approach is driven by local people, members and residents, to house people in need.</p> <p>GCLT have adopted a cohousing design to create a strong, supportive, healthy and resilient community, with a scheme</p>

	<p>which prioritises shared open spaces over large private gardens, pedestrians over cars, and shared facilities over private spaces.</p>
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b></p> <p>A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>GCLT aims to promote sociable, supportive and healthy lifestyles through adopting evidence based co-housing design principles, which encourage neighbourliness, social interactions and mutual support through the way housing is designed, built and laid out. This is particularly apparent the way the designs balance public and private space, prioritises shared over large private gardens, and value human scale spaces over extensive car access.</p> <p>Resilience comes through strong networks of support, and they aim to encourage this through design, and how residents live. This will create a community which is multi-generational and allows occupants to support each other through different stages of life.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b></p> <p>Attractive, safe, viable and well-connected.</p>	<p>Co-housing is underpinned by a number of principles which aims to strike a balance between private residents and the benefits of communal living, promoting strong and resilient communities based on mutual support. Such principles include promoting pedestrianisation as far as possible to create sage and sociable public realms, and encouraging multi-generational development which allows residents to support each other through all stages of life. It also allows individuals with additional needs to live more inclusive lifestyles, in a safe and supportive environment.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b></p> <p>A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>	<p>The nature of the co-housing model relies on the residential components being part of a wider, community-led scheme which includes shared amenities, shared facilities, and a variety of landscape spaces which offer significant community benefit. These assets are designed to ensure that new and existing residents alike can both benefit from these services, with communal spaces providing opportunities for hiring, working, and leisurely activities. The open spaces also promote and encourage opportunities for recreation and informal play.</p>
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b></p> <p>A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being</p>	<p>The co-housing model promotes a new mechanism for delivering residential development, providing much needed affordable housing in a non-traditional way.</p> <p>The scheme itself has been carefully designed to promote sustainability and encourage healthy lifestyles, by proving a near-carbon zero scheme which endeavours to reduce the need for private car travel.</p> <p>The site's location allows for residents to travel by foot or bike to access workplaces, education, and local facilities, and the site layout has been designed to prioritise pedestrian movement throughout the site.</p> <p>Sustainable construction methods have been explored and sustainable materials will be utilised to deliver high</p>

	performance and high quality buildings, whilst resources and labour will be sourced locally. The development will also offer the opportunity for local residents to have an opportunity to be involved in the construction process.
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